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EXEUNT . . . a short anthology of  
Americans abroad . . .

with two drawing by C. Peret

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Can you hear  
Severin's pen  
as he sketches  
dying Keats?

-- Dan Georgakas

Rome, Italy

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## Mr. Four Letters

Mr. Four Letters asked a pretty girl to visit him. One evening she knocked on his door. Mr. Four Letters was in his dining room eating one of his meager dinners. He swore to himself when he heard the knocking. He lived alone, and he enjoyed eating his small nourishment without interruptions. But he did get up and go to the door to see who was there. He was very surprised to see the girl, and he was delighted that she had come to his house. He never really thought she would be in his section of town.

"Come in, come in," Mr. Four Letters chanted with much interest. The girl entered. She looked around until she found his bedroom and immediately took off all her clothes and sat on his bed.

This surprised Mr. Four Letters even more than seeing the girl at his door.

"Why do you take off all your clothes, my dear?" he asked her with considerable bewilderment.

"I've come to get your advice," she replied eagerly.

"But why do you take off all your clothes?" he asked her again.

"You are Mr. Four Letters, aren't you?"

"I'm an old old man," Mr. Four Letters complained.

"But you asked me to visit you," the girl reminded him.

Before Mr. Four Letters could stop her, she was lying down on the bed, and rubbing her bottom on his white bedspread.

"I'm the elderly Mr. Four Letters," the old gentleman explained.

"Then why did you ask me here?" The girl was frankly puzzled.

"Why to help you," he answered.

"Where's your son?" she asked Mr. Four Letters.

"Kiss?" he raged.

"I really wanted to see the other one," the girl replied sitting up.

"My grandson and I are not on speaking terms," Mr. Four Letters said with much dignity.

"Then what's your name?" the girl asked staring at him.

"Love," the old gentleman said.

The pretty thing fell back on Love Four Letters' white bedspread and laughed until she wept.

-- John Stevens Wade

Apeldoorn, The Netherlands



## Liberty I Have Outpaced

Liberty, I have outpaced your carpet.

The smoke of Melville's strong cigar  
Lingers on at Uskudar,

And Mr. Hawthorne's tall top-hat,  
What could be lonelier than that?

Self-exiled men, like sage and thyme,  
Grow a wilderness and call it home.

O Liberty, I have outpaced your carpet.

Voyages men take, and tell them  
To the four corners of a room,

Towers men build, and climb them,  
No better than a Wayside Inn.

Customs-house and consulship  
Are hawsers the mighty cables slip.

O Liberty, I have outpaced your carpet.

Ding-a-ling, all anchors drowned  
In the old depths of a wound,

Albany and Istanbul,  
Ends of a peripatetic school,

The long, green summer lies afield,  
Afflicted by transcendant gold.

O Liberty, I have outpaced our carpet.

### A Flash-Poem On the Affinities of Frost

A strawberry, a strawberry,  
A strawberry with bright success  
Hangs in a niche of Caucasus,  
It and I alike in this,  
Our chins grow white with rime.

-- James Lovett

Istanbul, Turkey

## Bright Rags

Ah, the great black cypress of Hannibal the Carthaginian,  
Who drank a dab of death-fire from his ring-finger  
On the Bursa road!

Today that tree is tied with prayers  
By the votive-minded ladies of the neighborhood.  
They climb from the village of Eskihisar, clutching  
Their shawls of discretion, to tie those love-knots  
On its boughs. They crouch in their vivid pantaloons  
With their surcoats pinned like grief about them,  
To whisper it cantative bits of the Koran, begging  
A cure to the luck that fails. And what could be  
Kinder than silence to the flame of their candles?

## Ballad of Beddington

I heard the cry of a loon  
It was the ghost of Stephan Rothermell  
Who under my window-ledge would step  
To throw a scare into my soul

I heard the cry of an ant  
It was my old friend Leroy Zick  
A razor-strop in his father's house  
He came along to be nervous

I heard a whistle with fingers in it  
It was that fair-haired ghost Jim Lang  
When laughter made him weak  
He'd stretch out on the street

But the moon no good in the sky  
Pock-marked, whey-faced, puny  
As we went out rolling  
With our hands in our pockets  
Down hills and holes and river-beds  
Pretending to be destined logs  
Abrupt to the bottom we bounced  
There stood a Devil with a saw-mill  
Shouting orders to his Swedes  
They cut us up and stacked us up  
To serve more human needs.

-- James Lovett



## Four Poem Sequence

1. in a café beside the Loing drinking coffee  
mother of my saints    sweet  
lizard on my window  
thoughts of yesterday    early in the  
morning  
    i will settle myself for things to come  
  
five fishermen in three boats  
    in the distance trees  
shine green in the sun  
i see shade under them and cows eating grass  
    it is sunday and peaceful  
over the water the roof of the chateau  
shimmers dry rot in the heat  
  
black hairs on the lip of the  
waitress    her face cruel and witless  
    she approaches the becoming gentleman  
with the blonde    she smiles    there is a  
smell of money in the air  
  
enter a family    the father  
gray moustached    somewhat distinguished  
the mother flesh mountained  
fish face    fish lips  
    the son dull and bored  
says nothing  
  
a pretty bathing-suited girl  
lying between her father's legs  
passes in a flat-bottomed boat  
    white skin reflecting the sun
2. we drive each other desperate  
with our common hopeless causes  
    will you have another rum  
friend?    as you lean against  
the dirty wall  
  
    everyone is doomed    but doesn't die  
by bombs which must explode but haven't  
though centuries back some decades ago  
we had it all resolved  
    the celebration of the end of things  
like souls hearts and futures all  
sensitive    with great parties where all  
booze flowed licitly and illicitly  
with the changing times



3. as a young girl she would have made a handsome man

in the tired light under the dusky ceiling  
the profile is still striking a lover of  
plants and animals versed in their  
daily rhythms dedicated  
disciplined but it was not enough  
parted from the blonde Christina she  
showed her friends the verses and they  
after the usual compliments seeing them  
more clearly than she  
indulged in a little private desperation  
and hoped that the bottle she brought was  
full and proofed

how will she feel tomorrow? she  
will water the beloved  
flowers at five am  
or five minutes after  
we depart

have a cigaret friends another  
glass of rum there are people doomed who  
do not die by a bomb which must explode  
but hasn't now we'll ooze a bit of  
sorrow and if we nudge each other  
a little the bottle will soon be empty  
tomorrow we'll take an aspirin

4. three times you stomped  
on my liver  
as it lay thudding on the floor  
be afraid i tell you!

the cat is crazy turning in  
circles too large  
for the room  
thrashing its tail  
in the air!

take care! i'm going to  
slap you right in the mouth  
my hair is dancing on my head and  
my eyes are caged lions!

i have never worked on  
the thirty-third floor  
of any building  
nor like  
winter-grimed pigeons  
creaked my cold way  
to blackened ledges

i saw a B-51 fly fly  
around the light bulb  
and asked myself: will  
my sense of humor hold out?  
the thing was big and black  
and made a shocking noise in  
the bones  
the kind of fly that bites  
a horse's ass  
and spreads terror among  
the anthrax-fearing!

Joe Kidgel killed cats with his foot  
(while his buddies held them  
well stretched out from head to tail)  
Joe Kidgel was a football hero  
of local importance  
Joe Kidgel went to war --  
was killed by a bomb  
a merciful death as it  
hit him right on the head  
Joe Kidgel was a war hero  
of local importance

Poem # 46

Ignore his situation  
Keep the branding iron in your pocket  
Who's good looks matter to the postman?  
He delivers our mail  
Do not ask for whom he tolls  
... the piece of wood  
on which the boy is working  
was Abraham Lincoln

Poem # 49

Dead pigs hanging on the butcher-shop wall  
small blue flowers in the butcher's nose  
flutter gently only when he sneezes

Poem # 50

Tis a cold wind  
that blows no toasty cornflakes  
into our cardboard lives

— Harry Bell

Here & There, Europe



## It Shows

The tops of mountains that I tossed  
down eight-o'clock mornings  
Old rubber soles and heels  
It shows in my way of bragging  
The games I played bent each and feverish  
over the wooden tables  
It shows in my way of winking  
The holes in my socks  
My hands manipulating the leaden hockey-men  
The serious talks oh yes the wine I drank  
the curious caravans circling the painted  
desert  
It shows in my way of walking  
The big town riffs  
The pockets full of copper coin  
I know I sifted sand and gold  
The women shared their clothes and softness  
I pared like pears  
in pairs they entered, sat, and smiled  
and blinked and held their cups of tea  
It shows  
they laughed  
With each one thing in common each  
they slept when I tiptoed  
and sank it shows

-- Christopher Perret

Mallorca, Spain

Don't know whether you like  
working-copies of poems like this:  
I find them graphically  
interesting something — so  
if you agree, here's one  
for your collection.





Poem For Kathy

Shade me with your kindness  
Love in your forest make my bed

Let the greening grasses grow  
in the Gilead of my head

When you touch me Love  
how true Goodness breaks my heart

in two You're the image You're  
the stillness You're my eye Love

You're the need Fluent brushstrokes  
breed those songs which from bird

and silent pond make a Hokusai of me  
Tartar queen and mountain prince

strutting with the sun are One in  
me Love gladness rumbling for the kis-

ses of Cathay I have heard  
in treeless halls sun-haired drumbeats

fall from reeds stark with thread-  
like discipline You have taught me

what I know of the rockbound Barbary  
Love and Love amalgamated

in a long march to the sea When I  
taste you Love I know rolling laughing

tongue in cup that a god's son I must  
be God I am of Joy and Free.

-- Christopher Perret

Rome, Italy



A Few Lines For H. B. At Morning

(... harry's driving off into the sun in his tin-can citroën.  
where's he going: duck-foot Charlie walking off maybe thirty  
years ago with Paulette Goddard on his arm -- she was a dish --  
bolts, tin-cans, monkey-wrenches, nuts and screws -- What's  
left ...)

Don't let the sun go down  
Pull your end of the string  
Jerk it back into the sky  
Grinning cardboard  
Salt of your eyes  
Green cacti  
The lack of ebullition  
The globe the rope  
The circle  
The rooms of self-destruction  
    rectangular  
    pinch the nose and bite the eyelids  
Oh the wilful dead-end bottle  
Anywhere

What rips through your cage  
Shake the bars  
It's only the red coyote laugh  
    of those blind hand on shoulder  
    walking knee-deep into yesterday  
Deeply broken  
Beyond the trappings  
Weep too late for tomorrow's kisses  
Light heart of the salty lake  
Let there be bright!

— Christopher Perret

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NI PAR GOUT NI PAR DÉGOUT

(translation)

J'ais pris le papillon  
par les deux ailes  
et lentement j'ai tiré

I took the butterfly  
by its two wings  
and slowly pulled

j'ai regardé  
les deux morceaux

I looked at  
the two pieces

— Harry Bell

— Christopher Perret

La voiture de l'amour  
La voiture de la mort  
La voiture de la haine  
La voiture de la vie  
Que de circulation!

The car of love  
The car of death  
The car of hate  
The car of life  
What traffic!

Code de la route  
Choisir son chemin  
Moteur du destin  
Brebis du vide  
Tigres du néant  
Que d'ailes à briser  
Que de coeurs à ronger  
Que de monuments aux morts  
à avaler

Code of the road  
To choose your way  
And destiny's motor  
The sheep of emptiness  
The tigers of nothing  
So many wings to rip  
So many hearts to gnaw  
So many monuments to the  
dead to gulp

Prière de ne pas déranger  
Les vivants dans les virages

Please do not disturb  
The living at the turns

-- Harry Bell

-- Christopher Perret

### Surrealist Ads

(translated from Maurice Nadeau's Histoire du Surrealisme:  
to each ad was added the address of the Bureau of Surreal-  
ist Research -- 15 rue de Grenelle, Paris 7e -- followed  
by the "business hours.")

The rectory has lost nothing of its charm  
nor the garden its glory.

You who have lead in your head  
Melt it into surrealist gold.

SURREALISM  
is writing abjured.

"We cannot hope for too much  
from the strength and the capacity of the mind."  
Hegel

ENORMOUS PLEASURE LIKE  
THE BALLS  
OF HERCULES !

Ariadne my sister! of what love wounded  
Did you die on the sands where you were left?

If you like LOVE  
you will like  
SURREALISM.



The chocolate's umberella is discolored,  
Soak it in the door and braid.

SURREALISM

is within reach  
of all sleepwalkers.

PARENTS!

Tell your dreams to your children!

YOU WHO CANNOT SEE

Think of those who can.

Is surrealism  
the communism of genius?

-- Christopher Perret

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Nostalgia

These are the reason-rocking days,  
When all the turbulent Fish swim nigh  
In their trillions of amorous blue,  
And business men with hooks in their wallets  
Fish off the bridge called Kopru,  
While their mistresses, huddled in negligees,  
Wait till the coals in their red-hot braziers  
Also turn a little blue.

-- James Lovett

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Now,  
so late  
we only hope  
that others dare  
those things  
we thought  
too bold.

-- Dan Georgakas

## The Monastery: Aegina

Nektarios was a sweet old guy.  
In those dusty shoes (in that glass case)  
He tramped the island giving alms,  
Advice, dowries to ugly girls --  
But no saint. He could milk a goat  
Or brew or gather wild honey  
Or make good jam from roses.  
And now, looking his ikon in the eye,  
You see him wink and think it funny  
That a limping monk could get so far  
Among the pine trees and the palms,  
Bequeath his fellow monks his coat  
And leave them panting in the race  
Like donkeys following a car.

## The Idiot In The Bus: Aegina

With the back door agape and the horn drooling,  
He clumbered the slow-motion road in the heat's wake,  
Tossed his limbs inside the bus, shut his eyes, died.  
But the jibes revived him. He clapped hands in glee,  
Sat up, gained a seat, grinned at the classic crowd.  
And the miles within his head quietly conspired  
With the sun, with the rocks as he tried to speak.  
He was bound and gagged in the cave of sense,  
The robber's cave where the lights blow out,  
Where the air grows wings and the tongue fur.  
He beat his wings on the walls of our sight.

## Athens By Night

The sad gluttons who once feared  
Brambles on the baked rocks,  
Hunger and the amorous wasp,  
Now in fury and tight pants  
Slap cards against the sidewalk,  
Or pinch the mustached girls.  
The sheep they kept also love secrets:  
Their eyes blink from gourmet platters  
As bazoukis sob for unlikely hills,



As the lottery stirs in its cage.  
When the moon slides toward Piraeus,  
The octopi flirt with the lobsters,  
The blind waiters pocket tips,  
The curley boys stack up chairs,  
The chestnut sellers go home warm,  
The avenues collapse with laughter.

-- Lawrence P. Spingarn

Athens, Greece

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POUR SON ANNIVERSAIRE

Avril arbres enfants fleurs  
Champs rouges jaunes bruns et verts  
Colines monts et montagnes  
Rivière froide et claire  
Poissons oiseaux chats et chiens  
Le soleil  
Les maisons  
Saluent ta nouvelle saison

-- Harry Bell

For Her Birthday

April trees children flowers  
Red fields yellow brown and green  
Hills and hillocks mountaintops  
River cold and clear  
Fish birds cats and dogs  
And the sun  
And the buildings  
Greet the morning of your Spring

-- Christopher Perret (trans.)



"Young Amazon" by C. Peret

Lydden, Kent, England